



Summary: Great Lakes Collaboration Implementation Act of 2007

The Great Lakes are a unique natural resource, but their health is impaired by a variety of problems. In 2005, the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration produced a comprehensive strategic action plan for protecting and restoring the Great Lakes. The Regional Collaboration is a partnership of federal, state, tribal, and local government officials along with hundreds of non-governmental participants. The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Implementation Act would authorize many of the policy recommendations made by the Collaboration strategy.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- Authorizes a comprehensive program to establish mandatory ballast water management; creates a screening process for importations of live aquatic organisms; and provides for critical research, education and outreach programs.
- Directs the Corps to improve and operate the dispersal barriers in the Chicago Ship & Sanitary Canal.
- Prohibits the importation and interstate transfer of live Asian carp.

COASTAL HEALTH

- Reauthorizes a program for technical assistance for small treatment facilities and reauthorizes the State Revolving Loan Fund for \$20 billion over 5 years to assist communities with upgrading and improving their wastewater infrastructure.
- Authorizes \$50 million for NOAA to restore waterfront areas. Projects require a non-federal partner, and individual projects may not cost more than \$5 million.

WETLANDS & HABITAT PROTECTION

- Reduces polluted run-off entering our streams and rivers by protecting wetlands, which serve as natural filters. The bill reaffirms that Congress intended to ensure that our nation's waters were restored and maintained by adopting a statutory definition of "waters of the United States" based on long-standing EPA and Army Corps of Engineers regulatory use.

TOXIC SUBSTANCES

- Establishes the "Great Lakes Mercury Product Stewardship Strategy Grant Program" through which the EPA could award up to \$10 million per year for grants to Great Lakes states and Tribes to implement projects to phase-down mercury in the Great Lakes basin.
- Increases the Great Lakes Legacy program funding for contaminated sediment cleanup to \$150 million per year, provides EPA with greater flexibility by allowing the EPA to disburse funds to the nonfederal sponsor of a Legacy Act project, and provides additional coordination assistance to states.

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

- Directs EPA, NOAA, and USGS to prepare an annual research plan.
- Authorizes NOAA to establish an integrated observing system of observations, and directs EPA to develop indicators of water quality and related environmental factors in the Great Lakes and a network to monitor those indicators regularly throughout the Great Lakes basin.

COORDINATION & OVERSIGHT

- Codifies the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force to ensure that Great Lakes programs are coordinated and cost-efficient.
- Establishes in law the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration process.